

APPENDIX.

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE OF ARRANGEMENTS,

Presented June 16, 1843,

AND

RESOLUTIONS ADOPTED THEREUPON

BY THE SOCIETY.

THE Committee appointed to make arrangements for the Celebration of the Hundredth Anniversary of the American Philosophical Society, respectfully report: that although from time to time they have submitted to the Society the arrangements in progress, with a view to obtain instructions and authority in regard to them; yet having completed nearly all the duties growing out of the occasion, they deem it proper to put upon record, in a single report, an outline of the entire proceedings, and to call the attention of the Society to the unfinished business of the meetings succeeding the Anniversary.

On the report of a Committee of Inquiry* into the expediency of celebrating the hundredth Anniversary, the Society determined on the 3d of March last, to hold the celebration, to issue a special summons to the members requesting their attendance, and to invite one of the members to deliver an address on the 25th day of May, upon the history and prospects of the Society. Dr. R. M. Patterson, one of the Vice Presidents, was by the unanimous vote of the Society requested to prepare the address; and the undersigned were appointed a committee to carry into effect the wishes of the Society in the arrangements for the celebration. Dr. Patterson acceded to the request of the Society; and a circular note to members and societies in correspondence with us was at once issued, informing them of the intended celebration. The Committee also divided themselves into sub-committees, who took charge of different branches of the arrangements.

* Consisting of Dr. Chapman, Mr. Kane, Dr. Dunglison, Dr. Ludlow and Mr. Fraley.

In the progress of the discussions of the Committee, and of their conferences with members of the Society, the conviction grew that this occasion was a fitting one, not only to review the past, tracing the Society from its birth, and presenting it as the guardian of the scientific reputation of its founders, but also to mark the present condition of science in the United States, by calling its cultivators to meetings where they might bring their latest contributions in the walks which they had chosen. The lateness of the period at which this plan was determined on rendered success very doubtful, and prevented as general an appeal to the scientific men of our country as was desirable. A special circular was however addressed to many, who it was deemed probable might attend in person, or send papers to be read on the occasion.

This call of the Society was responded to in the most gratifying manner. The letters, generally, from individuals and societies, breathed a spirit of earnest zeal in the cause of science, and of kind regard for the welfare of the oldest scientific association of the country. Many of the writers were eloquent in expressing their sense of the interest of the occasion, of the importance of holding up to view the labours of the pioneers of science, and of assembling around our Society the men of science of the country, for mutual encouragement, support and improvement.

The tone of these letters greatly increased the interest felt in the preparations. The circumstances of the Society not permitting calls upon its funds, the members cheerfully came forward with contributions to defray the expenses of the meetings, and especially to secure the immediate publication in the Proceedings of abstracts or notices of the papers which might be read. Announcements of intention to be present, and of communications prepared or in progress, were daily received; and it became plain, that the efforts of the members resident in the city to give interest to the occasion, would be met with a kindred spirit by those in other places, and by our correspondents.

The oration delivered at the Musical Fund Hall, on the 25th of May, was attended by delegates from some of the societies in correspondence with us, by many invited guests from other parts of the country, by different associations of our city, the members of the religious bodies then in session, the judicial and municipal authorities, the professors and students of the University, Colleges, and High School, the officers of the Army and Navy stationed at Philadelphia, and by a respectable number of our citizens. One of the venerable seniors of the Society, the Rev. Dr. Ashbel Green, was also

present on the occasion. The ceremonies were opened by a few felicitous remarks from our President, and a prayer by the Rev. Provost Ludlow, and the Rev. Dr. Dorr was invited to close them with an appropriate benediction. The thanks of the Society will doubtless be presented to the orator of the day, Vice President R. M. Patterson, for his most interesting account of the early history and progress of the Society, and the Committee propose that a copy of the address, and the remarks of Mr. Du Ponceau, and the prayer of Dr. Ludlow, be asked for publication in the Proceedings.

The meetings for the transaction of scientific business, which it was originally expected would terminate on Friday, were not only held on that day, but were from necessity adjourned over to the Saturday, Monday, and Tuesday, following the Anniversary; the morning session usually occupying from 10 o'clock, A.M. until 2, P.M., and the evening session from 7½ until 10½, P.M. At the opening of Friday's meeting there were already thirty-two papers on the list, and the number increased before the following Tuesday to forty-five.

The names of the authors sufficiently assured the excellence of their communications, and the subjects generally were of high interest. Twenty-one papers were presented upon Physical Science and Chemistry, ten upon Natural History, Geology, Geography, and Ethnography, four upon Mechanics, four upon Medical Science, three upon Mathematics, and three upon History and Biography.

The interest of the meetings was much increased by the presence, generally, of the authors of memoirs, and by the care taken in preparing suitable diagrams and drawings for illustration. In this connexion, the Committee have pleasure in referring to the kind services of certain pupils of the High School, detailed with the consent of their parents by the Principal, to assist in preparing drawings, and to attend at the meetings as aids to the Committee of Arrangement. Many of the diagrams were executed by these youths in a style which did them great credit; and to their faithful assiduity during the meetings, and at other times, the Committee were much indebted. The attendance at all the meetings of many strangers and citizens, not members of the Society, manifesting untiring attention in the proceedings, an intelligent zeal in behalf of science, and a warm interest in the success of its cultivators, was in the highest degree cheering.

The meetings were closed on Tuesday evening by an address from Vice President Chapman; and the members and their guests

parted with feelings of mutual regret that their happy reunion had terminated, and with most agreeable, and we trust profitable, recollections of the occasion. The impression made upon the scientific gentleman from a distance found vent in the hope unanimously expressed that this would be but the beginning of a series of meetings under the auspices of the Society. The Committee would suggest that the thanks of the Society be returned to those associations who sent delegates, and to the gentlemen who attended the meetings.

In the course of the preparations for the Anniversary, many members of the Society were forcibly struck with the change which has gradually grown up in our list of members, from names embracing the talent and influence of the different parts of our own Commonwealth and of the United States, to those included in more restricted and local influences. The cause of this does not fully appear: exclusiveness has certainly never been part of the system of the Society. Even many of the leading scientific men in different sections of our country are not enrolled among our members; and the Society owes the coöperation which has so signally marked its late Anniversary, more to the wide views and generous spirit of the cultivators of science, than to the care taken to propitiate them. A suggestion upon this head, the Committee trust will find the favour, when presented to the Society as a body, which it has already very generally met from the members, when presented to them individually.

Towards the close of the meetings, a resolution was laid upon the table by one of our members from a neighbouring State, which the Committee deem of high importance, and which they recommend to the most favourable consideration of the Society. A meeting such as the resolution proposes, will enable the Society to perform a duty too long postponed. It will indeed have but partially fulfilled its duty to its early members, if it fails to make opportunity to bring their labours prominently forward, by a careful and elaborate review of them. Already misconception, in regard to the nature and extent of Franklin's discoveries in electricity, exists, and is obviously increasing:—the credit of the optical researches of Rittenhouse is awarded to others. Now is the time to correct these and other errors. A remarkably liberal and truth-seeking spirit is abroad among scientific men, less disturbed by local and national jealousies now than perhaps at any previous time. It invites us to bring in our contributions to the history of science, and to vindicate the claims of Americans to discoveries which otherwise may be lost to them. Almost every learned society has some provision for an occasional review

of the labours of its members; and in our own this review should, by law, be made annually. The task thus imposed is indeed one of peculiar delicacy; for the works of the living, in all the freshness of recent production, are to be criticised. But no such difficulty is presented by the labours of a past century: distance has sufficiently enlarged the field of view, to give to them their true positions and relative eminence; while it has not yet obscured and made them indistinct. Besides, we owe it as a debt to those who have gone before us, and whose name we inherit. It is the appropriate memorial of filial piety.

In accordance with the views presented in the foregoing Report the Committee offer for the consideration of the Society the annexed resolutions.

N. CHAPMAN,
J. K. KANE,
ROBLEY DUNGLISON,
JOHN LUDLOW,
F. FRALEY,
A. D. BACHE,
GEO. W. SMITH,

Committee.

1. *Resolved*, That the thanks of the Society be presented to the several learned societies and individuals, who contributed by their presence and coöperation to the interest and value of the meetings, which followed the late Anniversary.

2. *Resolved*, That the thanks of the Society be tendered to Vice-President Patterson, for the interesting, able, and instructive Discourse, pronounced by him at the centenary Anniversary of the Society, and that it be published under the direction of the Committee of Arrangements.

3. *Resolved*, That copies be also requested for publication, of the appropriate address delivered by the President of the Society, and of the eloquent prayer of the Reverend Provost Ludlow at the centenary celebration.

4. *Resolved*, That the papers, presented at the special meeting, and which may be considered as intended by their authors for publi-

cation in the Transactions, be referred to Committees, under the 1st section of chapter X. of the Laws of the Society.

5. *Resolved*, That so much of the resolution submitted by Prof. Henry at the special meeting, as relates to the celebration of future anniversaries, be referred to a Committee of *five*, to consider and report thereon.